

A HOME HEALTH CENTER

If you have a question, call 1-800-269-1275--NurseLine

SELF-CARE TOOLS

Cold Pack

an envelope-sized package of gel that remains flexible at very cold temperatures. An unopened package of frozen peas also works well

Humidifier and Vaporizer

Devices which add moisture to the air. A humidifier increases the moisture with a cool mist. A vaporizer puts out hot steam. Humidifiers have several advantages: it can't burn you, it makes tinier particles of water which can go further into the respiratory system, it can't hurt the furniture, and the cool air is more comfortable. A humidifier is noisier than a vaporizer and must be cleaned with a disinfectant after each use.

Medicine Spoon

transparent tubes with marks for typical dosage amounts.

Otoscope

A flashlight with a special attachment for looking into the ear.

Penlight

A penlight has a small intense light that is easily directed. It is useful for giving a physical exam and is easier to handle than a flashlight.

Stethoscope

Makes it easier for you to hear heart and chest sounds for a home physical exam.

Blood Pressure Cuff

Not essential unless some family member is diagnosed hypertensive.

Thermometer

Buy one with easy-to-read markings.

Self-Care Ointments and Cleansers

PRODUCT BRAND NAME	PURPOSE	STORAGE
Antibiotic creams (Bacitracin)	Abrasions Skin infections	Keep cool and dry, Discard if outdated
Antiseptic creams	Abrasions, cuts	Cool, dry
Hydrocortisone (Cortaid) (Caldecort) (Dermolate) (Lanacort)	Itching Poison ivy Limit use to two weeks	Cool, dry
Hydrogen peroxide	Minor cuts Abrasions	Cool, dry. Discard if it Discard it if fails to bubble when applied.
Petrolatum or petroleum jelly (Vaseline)	Dry skin Diaper rash	Anywhere
Rubbing alcohol--70%	Antiseptic Clean thermometer	Tightly closed

Medications

1. Use drugs only if non-drug approaches are not working.
2. Know the benefits and side effects of a medication before taking it.
3. Limit the medication to the minimum effective dose.
4. Never take a prescription drug meant for someone else.
5. Follow the prescription instructions exactly.
6. Keep medications in their original containers with the caps on tightly and stored according to directions.
7. Do not take medications in front of small children. They are great mimics. Don't oversell the "candy" taste of children's drug products or leave children's vitamins accessible to small children.

Over-the-counter Medications

Any medical drug that can be purchased without a physician's prescription. These medications are known as over-the-counter medications or OTC

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS FOR HOME USE

Keep on hand at all times:

Aspirin For pain, fever and inflammation. Not for children under age 15 due to the correlation of aspirin and Reyes Syndrome

Acetaminophen For pain and fever, especially with children.

Syrup of Ipecac To start vomiting if poisoning occurs.
READ THE LABEL OF WHAT THE CHILD HAS SWALLOWED TO DETERMINE IF VOMITING SHOULD BE INDUCED!

BUY AS NEEDED:

Anti-diarrheal To thicken stools or slow digestive spasms.

Antihistamines For allergies and cold symptom relief.
Also helpful for itching.

Decongestants To ease stuffy nose and head colds. Not safe for children under 1 year of age, unless prescribed by a physician.

Cough syrups:

Expectorants To thin and help clear the mucus
Suppressants To suppress the cough reflex

Laxatives Avoid if there is any chance of appendicitis.

Ibuprofen For pain and fever, particularly menstrual pain.